STATEMENT

BY

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At the General Debate of the First Committee
72nd Session
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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you as the Chairman and the bureau of the 72nd session of the 1st Committee. My delegation is fully committed to the successful fulfillment of the work of the Committee, and assures you of our full support and cooperation.

Afghanistan aligns itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation reiterates its commitment to multilateral diplomacy as a crucial principle for advancing the global disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. Nuclear weapons proliferation is a pressing issue the world faces, and we must unite multilaterally to act against the threat of nuclearization to global peace and security. In this regard, Afghanistan maintains its position regarding the P5+1 and Iran’s Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and believes that the commitment of all parties to the agreement and its implementation is crucial.

Afghanistan reaffirms its commitment for de-nuclearization, advancing disarmament and nonproliferation, and ultimately moving towards a nuclear-free world. My delegation strongly condemns the recent nuclear tests conducted by North Korea, and urges all states to sign, ratify and
support multilateral treaties relating to non-proliferation and disarmament. Afghanistan fully supports the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Afghanistan is strongly in favor of the establishment of the Middle East as a zone free of Nuclear Weapons and all Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

Afghanistan expresses concern for the current state of affairs, whereby the possibility of nuclear attack by aggressor states as well as by non-state actors appears very real. We also remain troubled about the use of biological, chemical, and radiological weapons. In this regard, we welcome the recent elimination of chemical weapons arsenal by the Russian Federation. Afghanistan remains concerned on the humanitarian consequences of the use of weapons of mass destructions. Therefore, we supported the Pledge of Austria on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons.

Further, Afghanistan’s commitment to strengthening nuclear disarmament was demonstrated more recently by adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, in an agreement made at the United Nations in July 2017.

Mr. Chairman,
The 2030 Agenda, particularly Goal 16 acknowledges the link between arms regulation and development, as well as between illicit trafficking in arms and organized crime. The abundance of illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons across the Durand Line, gives terrorists, violent extremists, and other organized criminal groups in our region easy access to weapons. This mass illicit trafficking of arms, mainly small and light weapons, has caused Afghans tremendous suffering for decades, and must be put to an end. Hence the nexus of illicit weapons, drug trafficking, and money laundering funds the purchase of weapons by non-state actors. Therefore, we call on all relevant parties to further strengthen their rules and regulations to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.


Mr. Chairman,

The presence of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), Explosive Remnant of War (ERWs), and land mines pose a severe threat to humankind. According to some surveys, in 2016 there were approximately 20,000
deaths and injuries from IEDs around the world, of which a vast majority were civilian casualties. Furthermore, in the last six years, the harm caused to civilians by IEDs has outweighed every other kind of weapon; in the first half of 2017, there were over 1,500 Afghan civilian casualties caused by IEDs. Afghanistan remains one of the worst affected countries due to IEDs. It is for these reasons that the resolution to counter the threat posed by IEDs is so critical to Afghanistan and many other countries of the world.

Let me thank all member states who supported the resolution titled “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices” adopted by consensus in 2015 and 2016 by the first committee and the UN General Assembly respectively. In pursuance to resolution A/RES/71/72, my delegation held the first informal consultations in coordination with the UNODA on 29 March 2017 in New York where panelists from UNODA, UNMAS, World Customs Organization, Interpol, Mines Advisory Group and UN Institute for Disarmament Research-UNIDIR were present.

My delegation is tabling the follow up resolution to 71/72 and we will have informal consultations with member states today at the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan. We seek your full support for the resolution.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.